

Of youre rede colera, pardee,
Which causeth folk to dreden in hir dremes
Of arwes, and of fyre with rede lemes,
Of grete beestes, that they wol hem byte,
Of contek, and of whelpes, grete and lyte;
Right as the humour of malencolie
Causeth ful many a man, in sleepe, to crie,
for feere of blake beres, or boles blake,
Or elles, blake develes wole hem take.
Of othere humours koude I telle also,
That werken many a man in sleepe ful wo;
But I wol passe as lightly as I kan.
Lo Catoun, which that was so wys a man,
Seyde he nat thus, Ne do no fors of dremes.
Now, sire, quod she, whan ye flee fro the bemes,
for Goddes love, as taak som laxatyf.
Up peril of my soule, and of my lyf,
I consaille yow the beste, I wol nat lye,
That bothe of colere and of malencolye
Ye purge yow; and, for ye shal nat tarie,
Though in this toun is noon apothecarie,
I shal myself to herbes techen yow,
That shul been for youre hele, and for youre prow;
And in oure yeerd tho herbes shal I fynde,
The whiche han of hire propretee, by kynde,
to purge yow bynethe, and eek above.
forget nat this, for Goddes owene love!
Ye been ful coleryk of compleccioun.
Ware the sonne in his ascencioun
Ne fynde yow nat replet of humours hote;
And if it do, I dar wel leye a grote,
That ye shul have a fevere terciane,
Or an agu, that may be youre bane.
A day or two ye shul have digestyves
Of wormes, er ye take youre laxatyves,
Of lawriol, centaure, and fumetere,
Or elles of ellebor, that groweth there,
Of katapuce, or of gaitrys berys,
Of herbe yve growyng in oure yeerd, ther mery is;
pekke hem up right as they growe, and ete hem yn;
Be myrie, housbonde, for youre fader kyn!
Dredeth no dreem; I kan sey yow namoore.

ADAME, quod he, graunt mercy of
yourre loore,
But nathelees, as touchyng daun
Catoun,
That hath of wysdom swich a greet
renoun,
Though that he bad no dremes for to drede,
By God, men may in olde bookes rede
Of many a man, moore of auctoritee
Than evere Caton was, so moot I thee,
That al the revers seyn of this sentence,
And han wel founden by experience,
That dremes been significaciouns,
As wel of joye as tribulaciouns
That folk enduren in this lif present.
Ther nedeth make of this noon argument;
The verray preeve sheweth it in dede.
Oon of the gretteste auctours that men rede
Seith thus, that whilom two felawes wente
On pilgrimage, in a ful good entente;
And happed so, they coomen in a toun,

Wheras ther was swich congregacioun
Of peple, and eek so streit of herbergage,
That they ne founde as muche as o cotage,
In which they bothe myghte ylogged bee;
Wherfore they mosten of necessitee,
As for that nyght, departen compaignye;
And ech of hem gooth to his hostelrye,
And took his loggyng as it wolde falle.
That oon of hem was logged in a stalle
fer in a yeerd, with oxen of the plough;
That oother man was logged wel ynough,
As was his aventure, or his fortune,
That us governeth alle as in commune.
And so bifel, that longe er it were day,
This man mette in his bed, theras he lay,
How that his felawe gan upon hym calle,
And seyde, Allas! for in an oxes stalle
This nyght I shal be mordred ther I lye.
Now help me, deere brother, or I dye;
In alle haste com to me, he sayde.

THIS man out of his sleep for feere abrayde;
But whan that he was wakened of his sleep,
He turned hym and took of it no keep;
Hym thoughte his dreem nas but a vanitee.
Thus twies in his slepyng dremed hee,
And atte thridde tyme yet his felawe
Cam, as hym thoughte, and seide, I am now slawe;
Bihoold my bloody woundes, depe and wyde!
Arys up erly in the morwe tyde,
And at the west gate of the toun, quod he,
A carte ful of donge ther shaltow se,
In which my body is hid ful prively;
Do thilke carte arresten boldely.
My gold caused my mordre, sooth to sayn,
And tolde hym every point how he was slayn,
With a ful pitous face, pale of hewe.
And truste wel, his dreem he foond ful trewe;
for on the morwe, as soone as it was day,
To his felawes in he took the way;
And whan that he cam to this oxes stalle,
After his felawe he bigan to calle.

The hostiler answerde hym anon,
And seyde, Sire, your felawe is agon;
As soone as day he wente out of the toun.
This man gan fallen in suspecioun,
Remembryng on his dremes that he mette,
And forth he gooth, no longer wolde he lette,
Unto the west gate of the toun, and fond
A donge/carte, as it were to donge lond,
That was arrayed in that same wise
As ye han herd the dede man devyse;
And with an hardy herte he gan to crye
Vengeance and justice of this felonye;
My felawe mordred is this same nyght,
And in this carte he lith gapyng upright.
I crye out on the ministres, quod he,
That sholden kepe and reulen this citee;
harrow! allas! heere lith my felawe slayn!
What sholde I moore unto this tale sayn?
The peple out sterte, and caste the cart to
grounde,
And in the myddel of the dong they founde
The dede man, that mordred was al newe.

BLISFUL God, that art so just & trewe!
Lo howe that thou biwreyst mordre alway!
Mordre wol out, that se we day by day.
Mordre is so wlatson, and abhomyable
To God, that is so just and resonable,
That he ne wol nat suffre it heled be,
Though it abyde a yeer, or two, or thre;
Mordre wol out, this my conclusioun.
And right anon, ministres of that toun
han hent the carter, and so soore hym pyned,
And eek the hostiler so soore engyned,
That they biknewe hire wikkednesse anon,
And were anhangen by the nekke/bon.
Heere may men seen that dremes been to drede;
And certes, in the same book I rede,
Right in the nexte chapitre after this,
I gabbe nat, so have I joye or blis:
For certeyn cause, into a fer contree,
If that the wynd ne hadde been contrarie,
That made hem in a citee for to tarie
That stood ful myrie upon an haven/syde;
But on a day, agayn the eventyde,
Therwynd gan chaunge, & blew, right as hem leste.
Jolif and glad they wente unto hir reste,
And casten hem ful erly for to saille.
But to that o man fil a greet mervaille;
That oon of hem in slepyng as he lay,
Hym mette a wonder dreem agayn the day:
him thoughte a man stood by his beddes syde
And hym comanded, that he sholde abyde,
And seyde hym thus: If thou tomorwe wende,
Thou shalt be dreynt; my tale is at an ende.
He wook, and tolde his felawe what he mette,
And preyde hym his viage for to lette;
As for that day, he preyde him to byde.
his felawe, that lay by his beddes syde,
Gan for to laughen, and scorned him ful faste.
No dreem, quod he, may so myn herte agaste,
That I wol lette for to do my thynges;
I sette nat a straw by thy dremynges,
for swevenes been but vanytees and japes;
Men dreem al day of owles or of apes,
And eek of many a maze therwithal;
Men dreem of thyng that nevere was ne shal.
But sith I see that thou wolt heere abyde,
And thus forslawthen wilfully thy tyde,
God woot it reweth me; and have good day!
And thus he took his leve, and wente his way.
Buter that he hadde half his cours yseyled,
Noot I nat why, ne what myschaunce it eyled,
But casuelly the shippes botme rente,
And ship and man under the water wente
In sighte of othere shippes it bisyde,
That with hem seyled at the same tyde.
And therefore, faire Pertelote so deere,
By swiche ensamples olde maistow leere,
That no man sholde been to recchelees
Of dremes, for I seye thee, doutelees,
That many a dreem ful soore is for to drede.
O, in the lyf of Seint Kenelm I rede,
That was Kenulphus sone, the noble kyng
Of Mercenrike, how Kenelm mette a thyng;

A lite er he was mordred, on a day,
His mordre in his avyscioun he say.
His norice hym expowned every deel
His swevene, and bad hym for to kepe hym weel
for traisoun; but he nas but seven yeer oold,
And therfore litel tale hath he toold
Of any dreem, so booly is his herte.
By God, I hadde levere than my sherte
That ye hadde rad his legende as have I.
Dame Pertelote, I sey yow trewely,
Macrobeus, that writ the avisioun
In Affrike of the worthy Cipiou,
Affermeth dremes, and seith that they been
Warnyng of thynges that men after seen.
And forthermoore, I pray yow looketh wel
In the Olde Testament, of Daniel,
If he heeld dremes any vanitee.
Reed eek of Joseph, and ther shul ye see
Wher dremes be somtyme, I sey nat alle,
Warnyng of thynges that shul after falle.
Looke of Egypt the kyng, daun Pharao,
His baker and his butiller also,
Wher they ne felte noon effect in dremes,
Whoso wol seken actes of sondry remes,
May rede of dremes many a wonder thyng.
O Cresus, which that was of Lyde kyng,
Mette he nat that he sat upon a tree,
Which signified he sholde anhangen bee?
O heere Andromacha, Ectores wyf,
That day that Ector sholde lese his lyf,
She dremed on the same nyght biforn,
How that the lyf of Ector sholde be lorn,
If thilke day he wente into bataille;
She warned hym, but it myghte nat availle;
He wente for to fighte natheles,
And he was slayn anon of Achilles.
But thilke tale is al to longe to telle,
And eek it is ny day, I may nat dwelle;
Shortly I seye, as for conclusioun,
That I shal han of this avisioun
Adversitee; and I seye forthermoor,
That I ne telle of laxatyves no stoor,
for they been venymes, I woot it weel;
I hem diffye, I love hem never a deel!
Now let us speke of myrthe, & stynte al this;
Madame Pertelote, so have I blis,
Of o thyng God hath sent me large grace;
for whan I se the beautee of youre face,
Ye been so scarlet/reed aboute youre eyen,
It maketh al my drede for to dyen;
for, also siker as In principio,
Mulier est hominis confusio;
Madame, the sentence of this Latyn is,
Womman is mannes joye, and al his blis.
for whan I feele anyght your softe syde,
Albeit that I may nat on yow ryde,
for that oure perche is maad so narwe, allas!
I am so ful of joye and of solas,
That I diffye bothe swevene and dreem.
And with that word he fley down fro the
a beam,
for it was day, and eek his hennes alle;
And with a chuk he gan hem for to calle,